

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 534
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4288

USEC

E.O. 11652: SGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR SP PO
SUBJECT: VISIT TO SPAIN OF PORTUGUESE PRESIDENT

REF: MADRID 4176, MADRID 4080

1. GIVEN ITS CHIEF-OF-STATE LEVEL, THE VISIT TO SPAIN OF PORTUGUESE PRESIDENT RAMALHO EANES HAD MAINLY SYMBOLIC VALUE, THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR FOR SOUTHERN EUROPE (ALVARO DE CASTILLO) TOLD EMBOFF. THE SYMBOLISM WAS NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT, HE SAID, CONSIDERING THE HISTORY OF RELATONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THAT HAVE VARIED FORM "CORDIAL IGNORANCE" TOOUTRIGHT COOLNESS, ANDIN VIEW OF THEIR CONSIDERABLE SIMILARITIES AND MUTUALITIES OF INTEREST.

2. EANES HIMSELF HAD CAUSED A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION, ACCORDING TO CASTILLA, REVEALING CONSIDERABLE PREPARATION IN GOING INTO SOME DEPTY ON ISSUES AND SAYING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS. BOTH SIDES HOPED, SAID CASTILLA, THAT THE
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VISIT WOULD STRENGTHEN EANES AND, INTERESTINGLY, SPAIN'S SENIOR MILITARY FIGURE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEFENSE LT. GEN GUTTERREZ MELLADO WHO FACED TROUBLE WITHIN THE SPANISH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. IN RESPECT TO GUTIERREZ MELLADO, CASTILLA SAID, HE THOUGHT THAT EANES' CALL ON GUTIERREZ MELLADO, AND THE ATTENTION PAID TO HIM, MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOME HELP.

3. OVERALL, SAID CASTILLA, SPAIN WAS ANXIOUS TO DO WHATEVER IT COULD TO TRANSLATE GOOD WILL INTO CONCRETE MEASURES AND PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. A MAJOR PROBLEM, HOWEVER, WAS THE FACT THAT AS A SMALLER, LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRY, PORTUGAL HAD LITTLE TO SELL SPAIN. HOWEVER, THERE WERE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE AND NUMBER OF BILATERAL COMMISSIONS OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER, AND THEY PRESENTED A GOOD STARTING BLOCK.

4. THE PORTUGUESE EXPRESSED THEMSELVES AS ANXIOUS TO SEE SPAIN IN NATO, ACCORDING TO CASTILLA, SAYING THEY HAD ALWAYS SEEN THEMSELVES ISOLATED BY SPAIN'S NON-MEMBERSHIP AND FELT MORE LIKE "UNCOMFORTABLE GUESTS" THAN LIKE MEMBERS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY WELCOMED WHAT THEY CALLED NATO'S INCREASING INTEREST IN THE ATLANTIC TO THE SOUTH OF ITS TRADITIONAL AREA OF CONCERN.

5. ON PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH ENTRY INTO THE EC, CASTILLA SAID, THE PORTUGUESE PREFERRED THAT THE TWO CASES BE HANDLED SEPARATELY, EXPLAINING THAT AS THEIR ECONOMY WAS WEAKER THEY NEEDED MEMBERSHIP MORE, AND WERE FRANKLY IN THE POSTURE OF A PETITIONER.
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